Louisiana Office of Public Health Laboratories	
Test Name	Venereal Disease Research Laboratory (VDRL) Test
PHL Location	Office of Public Health Laboratory Baton Rouge
CPT Code	86592
Synonyms	Venereal Disease Research Laboratory Test, VDRL, Syphilis, *Treponema pallidum*
Brief Description of Test	The VDRL is a nontreponemal test that measures anti-lipid antibodies, which are formed by the patient in response to lipids released from damaged cells early in infection with *Treponema pallidum* (the causative agent of syphilis) and lipid-like material from the treponemal cell surface. During syphilis infection, an antibody-like substance called reagin can be detected in the patient's serum and CSF. Nontreponemal tests are superior to treponemal tests for following response to therapy. The VDRL is a reflex test that is performed when the Syphilis EIA is initially reactive or equivocal.
Possible Results	Nonreactive Weakly Reactive Reactive (with quantitation)
Reference Range	Nonreactive
Specimen Type	Serum
Specimen Container(s):	Red top tubes, Marble top tubes, polypropylene vials
Minimum volume accepted:	1 mL serum
Collection Instructions	Blood should be collected in a plastic, sterile STD Program approved collection tube. Please follow the manufacturer's instructions on clot time requirements and centrifuge speed/ time requirements. Label specimen with Patient Name and a 2nd Unique Identifier such as a chart number or medical record number. DOB is not considered unique. Complete a STD/HIV Lab Form for each specimen or order test in StarLIMS. Lab submission form must be thoroughly completed

	with patient's first and last name, 2nd patient identifier, gender, date of birth, date and time of collection, specimen source, test requested, submitter's name, address, fax and contact number. Additional information regarding patients' address is requested. Transport specimen to laboratory as soon as possible after collection. Keep submission forms insulated from specimens.
Storage and Transport Instructions	Specimens must be shipped refrigerated (2-8°C) and can be stored for up to 5 days. For longer storage, serum should be poured into a sterile screw cap tube and be frozen at -20°C or colder. Frozen specimens must be shipped on dry ice and received at a temperature of -20°C or colder. If a specimen is frozen, indicate the Date/Time specimen was frozen on the lab form or the LIMS manifest.
Causes for Rejection	Hemolyzed, lipemic, or icteric specimens must be rejected. Improper labeling, expired collection tubes , unspun samples, tubes that contain less than 90% of the total drawing capacity (QNS), specimen age >5 days if specimen has not been frozen at -20°C or colder. Improper storage and improper transport temperature requirements are also reasons for rejection.
Limitations of the Procedure	Nontreponemal tests are not entirely specific for syphilis, nor do they have satisfactory sensitivity in all stages of syphilis. Biological false positive reactions can occur with nontreponemal tests in persons who abuse drugs, have diseases such as lupus, mononucleosis, malaria, leprosy, viral pneumonia, or have recently been immunized. Cross reactions may occur with other treponemal infections, such as yaws, pinta, bejel, or siti. A treponemal test should be done to confirm reactive VDRL results.
Interfering Substances	Grossly hemolyzed, lipemic, or icteric specimens
References	Captia™ Syphilis IgG EIA Package Insert BD VDRL Antigen Package Insert
Additional Information	This is a reflex test that is automatically ordered on a sample when Captia™ Syphilis IgG EIA assay is initially equivocal or reactive.
Release Date	03/15/2016
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